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OLC 69-0641

22 July 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Briefing of Senator John Sherman Cooper (R., Ky.)
Re Soviet Y-Class Submarine Production

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1. Per the Director's instructions, I visited Senator Cooper's office this afternoon to brief him on the above subject in response to his 18 July letter to the Director. There I found Messrs. [redacted] (DIA) and Robert Wiser (DOD/OSD/DDR&E) awaiting the Senator's return from the Capitol. We agreed that if the Senator so wished, we would discuss the matter with him jointly.

2. When the Senator joined us he welcomed [redacted] suggestion 25X1 for a joint discussion. The Senator first brought up his questions to Secretary Laird (not addressed to the Agency) regarding the phase-1 deployment of [redacted] Mr. Wiser provided and explained to the Senator a "secret" chart covering this subject.

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3. Turning to the Soviet Y-class submarine problem, [redacted] proposed an oral briefing because of the lack of facilities in the Senator's office to hold the written material of the appropriate classification. I said that I too proposed an oral briefing and the Senator readily agreed.

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4. [redacted] then summarized the Y-class submarine production situation as follows:

a. present evidence indicates that a total of 22 Y-class submarines either have been deployed, are fitting out or are under construction. Of these, 9 or 10 have been launched, 5 of which have been deployed to operational bases and 4 or 5 are fitting out. On 22 May when Secretary Laird testified the evidence indicated only 8 or 9 had been launched.

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b. total assembly time per unit is between 18 and 26 months.

c. at Severodvinsk on the White Sea, 8 Y-class units are on the ways at any one time. Facilities at Komsomorsk in the Soviet Far East can probably handle 4 units at one time.

5. In response to the Senator's questions, [redacted] added that:

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a. present production of Y-class submarines at both facilities is estimated at 6 to 8 per year.

b. thus the Soviets, by the mid-1970s, might have 35 to 50 units.

c. by July of 1970 a total of 17 units may have been launched.

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6. I generally concurred in [redacted] statement, pointing out that we were all working from the same raw intelligence and that there were no significant differences in our estimates. I noted only that in regard to the assembly time which [redacted] had put at 18 to 26 months, we leaned more toward 18 months, and that regarding the Komsomorsk facilities we preferred to say that "3 or 4 units" might be on the ways at one time (rather than [redacted] statement of 4 units).

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7. As our discussion began, Mr. William Miller, of Senator Cooper's staff, made a vigorous effort to attend. [redacted] questioned his clearances and Mr. Miller assured [redacted] he had all the necessary clearances. [redacted] said he would be glad to verify this and called DIA, reporting back that Mr. Miller did not have the necessary clearances. The Senator thereupon asked Mr. Miller to absent himself.

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8. In conclusion the Senator expressed appreciation and said this subject had caused him a great deal of difficulty but he hoped he now understood it and would not have to bother us again.

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